GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETIN

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General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

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HOW TO OBTAIN THE BULLETIN

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Leningrad, a Dying City Named for a Dead Man

IN CHANGING the name of Petrograd to Leningrad the Soviet Government has named a dying city after a dead man. Moscow, like Vienna, Riga, and Trieste, after passing under the shadow of poverty thrown by war devastation, is once more on the path to prosperity, but the city of the Tsars, despite its glorious past, appears to be drifting toward oblivion.

Old St. Petersburg by any name will always be known as a city, which, like Tell-el-Amarna, the citadel of Tutankamen's father-in-law, was dedicated to a great ideal. St. Petersburg was the lever used by Peter the Great to lift Russia out of her stodgy Asiatic habits into the light of European culture and commerce.

Loses Chief Right to Live

"Russia's window to Europe" was the significant designation of St. Petersburg before the war and revolution. Riga (in Latvia) and Warsaw now are both the doors and windows of Russia when she chooses to use them, and with the transfer of government to the more centrally located city of Moscow, Leningrad has lost its chief reason for being much more than a railway junction. Before the war it had a population of 2,000,000. Now it has fewer than one-third that number.

Except for the main avenues, Leningrad's streets are deserted; grass grows between the cobblestones, street cars are running half empty when they do run, most of the shops and gay restaurants are closed. The harbor holds no fleets even when the ice is out in April. Leningrad offers a melancholy sight to the tourist. Stately mansions of royalty are tumbling in. Many were built on piles like houses in Venice or Amsterdam and the foundations are collapsing. Basements are filled with the Neva's overflow and roofs and window frames have been torn out long ago to supply fuel for a desperate citizenry. Famous parks are wildernesses. Gaunt factories are empty and still. Long streets of laborers' homes, dilapidated, echo no sound.

When Catherine Ruled

How different when the brilliant Catherine ruled 100 years ago! Some called her Catherine the Great; many called her Catherine the Bad. Good or bad, with an empire as large as the Roman Empire from which to exact wealth, she set a pace for extravagance, contempt for human life, and loose living which Nero himself might be pushed to equal. She built palaces in rapid succession for her favorites. One of them, Orloff, returned the favor by strangling Catherine's husband, in order that she might satisfy her ambition to be sovereign of all Russia from the Atlantic to the Pacific. For Potemkin she built the Tauride Palace at a cost of millions of rubles and hundreds of lives. The Tauride Palace became the meeting place of the Duma and in turn the birthplace of the Soviet Government.

Potemkin, in his gratitude, gave an entertainment typical of lavish, royal St. Petersburg. For illumination $60,000 was spent. On one evening 140,000 lamps and 20,000 wax candles were burning. Between the palace and the river,

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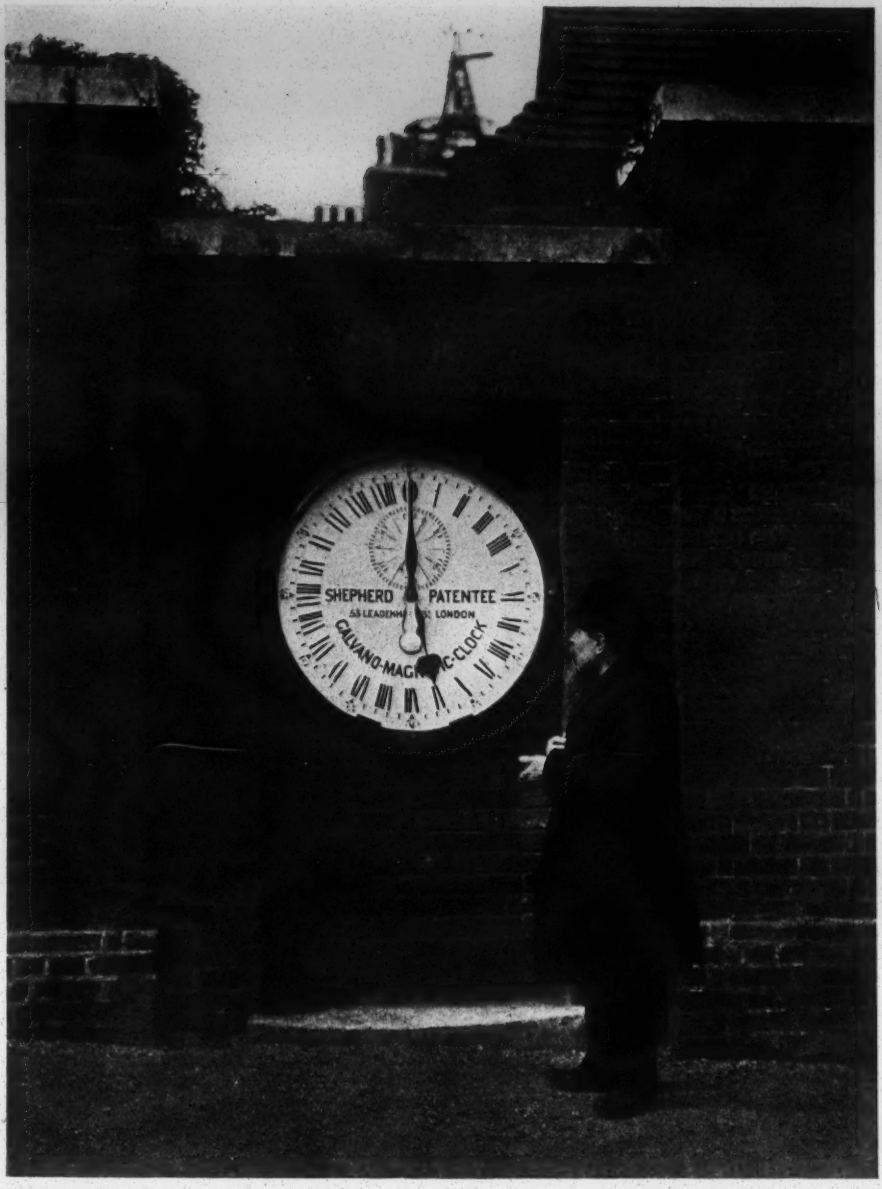

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THE GREAT CLOCK AT GREENWICH OBSERVATORY, LONDON

Here the maps of the world begin, for Greenwich is the international prime meridian. Every place on every map throughout the world is now indicated as east or west of this observatory. (See Bulletin No. 4.)

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Ninety-nine Per Cent of Emeralds Come from Bogota.

THE PRINCESS SNOW WHITE of world's mines awaits a prince—or will make a prince. Nearly everyone knows the fairy story of the unfortunate princess who pricked her finger and submerged her castle in sleep for one hundred years. Then came the prince. He hewed down the brambles, waked the sleeping Snow White, and they were married and lived happily ever after.

Down in South America lies the Princess Snow White of mines—sleeping. Years and years ago, when the Spanish conquerors still were in the land, the west coast of South America was combed for gold, silver and precious stones. The State of New Granada, now Colombia, these treasure-hunters found, was the single source of the jewel most prized by many men—the emerald. Spanish masters therefore compelled Indians to work the mines and bring gems to Bogota, the Capital.

Emerald City of the World

Bogota still is the emerald city of the world and practically all the Spanish mines still are being worked. All except one, the Princess Snow White of mines, natives say. Years ago the Soscuez mine, as it is called, was swallowed up by the jungle. Now it awaits the prince to cut away the brambles. The rich Somondoco ledge was a Snow White mine, lost for more than a hundred years, until its rediscovery sixteen years ago. Beside this adventure shoveling sand for pirate gold is as prosaic as dish-washing. But there is one condition—no fairy story is complete without a condition—the mine belongs to the government! The discoverer can lease it and work it, but mining emeralds and salt in Colombia are government monopolies.

Colombia's capital city can borrow a phrase from American advertisers and truly say, "If it's an emerald, it's from Bogota." Many mines are near the capital, but even the operators in outlying districts trade through that city. Bogota is described by travelers as 600 miles from anywhere. But as long as the world demands emeralds, it cannot forget Bogota, because 99 per cent of the annual supply comes from this single source.

Found in Ancient Volcanic Craters

Emeralds are a type of beryl. Crystals of translucent beryl have been found in New Hampshire weighing as much at two tons, but the emerald, the purer form, is never large. Like the diamond, emeralds are found in old volcanic crater mouths. Natives slice away ledges of rock on the mountain side and crush it to get the stones. Operations in Colombia, though primitive, produce emeralds valued at $1,000,000 every year. A few emeralds are found in India, Austria, and Egypt but not a one in Ireland. In Egypt the mine at Jabel Zabara that produced emeralds for Cleopatra is producing some for New York today, but the Colombian monopoly, like the Kimberley combination, is unchallenged.

Saint Augustine, Florida, is proud of being the first city established in North America by virtue of its founding in 1565. But Bogota, the emerald city, was twenty-nine years old when Saint Augustine took its place on the map, hav-

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the whole space was occupied by booths, swings and shops, where clothes, boots, caps, and gee-gaws were distributed gratis to the people. Three thousand guests were invited and all attended in costume. White dresses of members of the special ballet were decorated with diamonds. Invisible music boxes played selections of noted composers. When they were silent three hundred skilled musicians and singers played and sang for the merry-makers. Potemkin, himself, had a crown for the occasion so heavy with jewels he was compelled to give it to his adjutant to carry!

Rulers Suffered With Serfs from Unhealthy Site

This former capital of Russia has always had the reputation of being disease-ridden. Within the last year the death rate has fallen lower than the usual figure, which hovers about 35 per thousand. The reason offered, however, is that the weak have all died off and only the strong remain. This is what comes of a Tsar's whim, for Peter the Great insisted that his "window to Europe" rise on the swamp where the Neva enters a shallow bay of the Gulf of Finland. There it stands, now girded 'round about with granite quays, but the Neva still gets out of hand when a stiff southwest wind backs up water in the bay. Royalty suffered along with serf. Peter died from fever caused by his rescue of a peasant woman and child who had fallen through the ice. The average reign of seven monarchs in the first forty years after the founding of the city was less than six years.

Peter the Great might be said to have had a "marine complex." Russians traditionally avoid the ocean. But not Peter. He loved the sea from boyhood when he satisfied his longing by making boats. His great desire was that Russia should become a sea-faring nation and that his capital would one day outshine Venice or Amsterdam. So profound was his veneration of the Dutch that he called his city Sankt Petersboorgh. This became St. Petersburg, which gave way at the opening of the World War to Petrograd, because the older name was too German. Leningrad, like Venice and Amsterdam, has numerous canals, but unlike these two cities, it can never be a great port. The river and bay, for one thing, are frozen solid six months of the year. The hinterland on which Leningrad draws is a forest district. Riga is the logical western port for the great producing sections of Russia.

Leningrad is like New York in its utilization of islands at the river mouth, but the main part of town is on the south bank, corresponding to Brooklyn. Again, Leningrad is similar to Washington. Like the capital of the United States it has broad avenues radiating from the main government buildings on the river bank. These avenues are called prospects. The chief of these is the Nevski Prospekt, one hundred and fifteen feet wide, running nearly three miles from the Admiralty buildings to the Alexander Nevsker Monastery. It is lined with what were once great bazaars, rich homes, hotels, and government buildings. In the old days shouting sleigh-taxi drivers perilously perched on the thills would race down this snow-paved avenue, their splendid black horses three or four abreast galloping like steeds of an ancient chariot race. Leningrad's sleigh bells now jingle faintly in a communist state where the romance and extravagance of royalty give way to realism.

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Port Said, Topsy City on the Suez

RECENT announcement that the Suez canal is to be deepened to thirty-six feet in order to compete with the forty foot Panama canal brings attention to the city which will probably be one of the headquarters of operations, Port Said. This counterpart to Colon is a city built of mud way out in the Mediterranean and unlike most other Egyptian towns it has no storied past.

Port Said is a city without roots, whose foundations were spewed up by dredges and whose buildings and population were dropped off by passing ships. It has neither ancestry nor traditions. Like Topsy it "just growed."

The city is as nondescript as its population. The high iron fence which separates the parade from the canal marks the boundary line between cool laziness and feverish activity.

Ceaseless Song of Ceaseless Toil

In the harbor, small, powerful tugs snort here and there amid the traffic, white rowboats with plain flat awnings move like palsied shuttles between gang plank and customs quay, trim cutters from the British men-o'-war suggest order in the midst of chaos, and always the coolies coaling the liners trot up the steep planks, singing a ceaseless song of ceaseless toil.

Although these grimy drudges do not belong to the nobility, Port Said owes them much, for this city not only protects one end of the jugular vein or hamstring of the Empire from envious wolves but has the more profitable, if less picturesque honor, of being the world's greatest coaling station.

In such tiny, obscure ports as Otaru, ships can be coaled in short order by machinery. But the day of coaling machinery in Port Said is just now dawning.

Coaling Ships and the Coal Dust Coolie

Before the mail boats are securely tied up, night-black barges covered with night-black men with milk-white eyes have attached themselves to their staunch flanks and the fuel is pouring abroad in an endless line of limp baskets borne on the shoulders of sweating men, whose limbs, deeply coated with coal dust, seem made of oxidized metal.

The baskets are not passed from hand to hand. Each man shoulders his load and trots with it up the steep plank, soon reappearing to jump down into the dusky depths of the barge.

Steamer to barge—barge to pile—pile to barge—barge to leviathan or tramp: one would think that half the sooty fuel would be lost through frequent handling. But no man can teach Port Said anything about coaling—unless it be the coolie.

Once during night coaling, a plank with six coolies on it dropped with a thud to the barge deck and for weeks the coolies refused to coal at night, except those ships that have side ports.

This was an awful sacrilege! It is even hinted that the mail was delayed. But the P. and O. liners have side ports and it was not one of them, so Jove withheld his thunderbolts. The coolies gave the excuse that they were tired.

Never Hurry—Except for Drinks

But that takes you to the other side of the iron fence. There the people are always tired. Tennis is a game in which the ball hovers in the air like a

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ing been founded in 1536 by General Quesada, whose residence is still pointed out to visitors. Though Bogota is almost on the Equator, it has a comfortable climate because it is perched up on a mountain plateau a mile and half above the sea. Behind it are two mountain peaks, crowned with snow part of the year and crowned also with two monasteries.

Colombia has 6,000,000 inhabitants but its capital has a population of only 143,000. This is because Bogota is locked within her mountain ridges. No railroad as yet connects the capital with a port on the Atlantic, so a tourist must travel alternately by boat and railroad for seven to ten days to get to Bogota. Once there he will find a quaint, quiet old city, whose restful atmosphere is not even disturbed by the noise of a trolley car. A visitor's first impression is that Bogota is a city of churches. However, he will find that many of the large churches are headquarters of government departments, various ministers having commandeered them for office buildings. The city is built on the mountain slope, so the citizens make stream beds of their street gutters. Swift mountain creeks are diverted into those streets, which run downhill.

Mystery stories, romances and tragedies have been written around famous diamonds. Emeralds can tell strange stories, too. Princes of India today are proud of their emeralds. It is believed that many of them were bought from Spanish traders; a part of the loot of Pizarro's conquest of Peru. The ancient Peruvians must have obtained them in trade from the Chibcha Indians of Colombia many hundred years ago.

Bulletin No. 2, March 10, 1924.

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PARADING BEFORE THE WINTER PALACE IN PETROGRAD BEFORE THE WAR.

In Leningrad now basements are filled with the Neva's overflow and roofs and window frames have been torn out to supply fuel for a desperate citizenry. Famous parks are wildernesses. Long streets of laborers' dilapidated homes echo no sound. (See Bulletin No. 1.)

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How Man Has Kept Tab on Time

A 24-HOUR day, beginning at midnight, is so universally accepted by landsmen that the recent announcement that the system would be extended to ships, which now begin their day at noon, is greeted with surprise.

However, land time and ship time are only two of a number of ways which men have marked the fleeting moments, and various other ways survive even now.

Alfred the Great had wax candles, 12 inches high, marked in notches to tell off the four hours they burned. He later covered them with thin white horn, lantern-fashion, to protect them from drafts, but he was far behind his times in comparison with other portions of the world, and his timepiece was crude in the extreme compared with other inventions before 900 A. D.

Ancients of the Orient "Burned" Time, Too

Primitive peoples, before the dawn of history, fixed a pole or stick in the ground and drew a line about it representing the course of the shadow it cast from sunrise to sunset. We may suppose that when Mr. Caveman started out in the morning on a foraging expedition, he led Mrs. Caveman out and notched the shadow-line to show her when she could expect him home. Some of his fellow-mortals in other parts of the world in the same stage of development made a kind of hemp or grass rope which they dampened and knotted in regular spaces. When this was lighted, the slowly and regularly creeping spark told off the flight of time. It is said that these primitive time-markers are used in parts of Chosen (Korea) today.

Though some students believe that the early Japanese had no method of reckoning time, others claim that primitive Japanese and Chinese used almost the same thing as the rope, though their device more nearly resembled a wick which had been so treated that it smouldered out the hours. One of these ancient wicks is now in a museum in Paris.

Even before 3800 B. C. the sparkling stars over Eastern deserts had made astronomers of men who had begun to reckon time by the cycles of the planets. No one knows when they first divided the time from sun to sun into 24 parts nor when the hours were first divided into minutes, but Ptolemy adopted the method in the second century and gave it to his world.

A Time "Sinker" on Malay Junks

Some of the Malays even today use a crude apparatus for measuring time which has probably been in vogue in the Far East for almost 5,000 years. It is called the water-clock and is simply a small dish or round bowl with a small hole in the bottom. When this is placed in a tub of water it gradually becomes full and sinks, which always happens in the same period of time. On the Malay junks it is the customary thing to see a coconut shell floating in a bowl of water to tell off the time away from the home port.

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white-breasted gull. Bathing is even less strenuous, being conducted according to Graeco-Roman rules. Golf moves with dignity rather than incandescent language. But the drink steward has developed winged heels while carrying libations to the gods of the veranda.

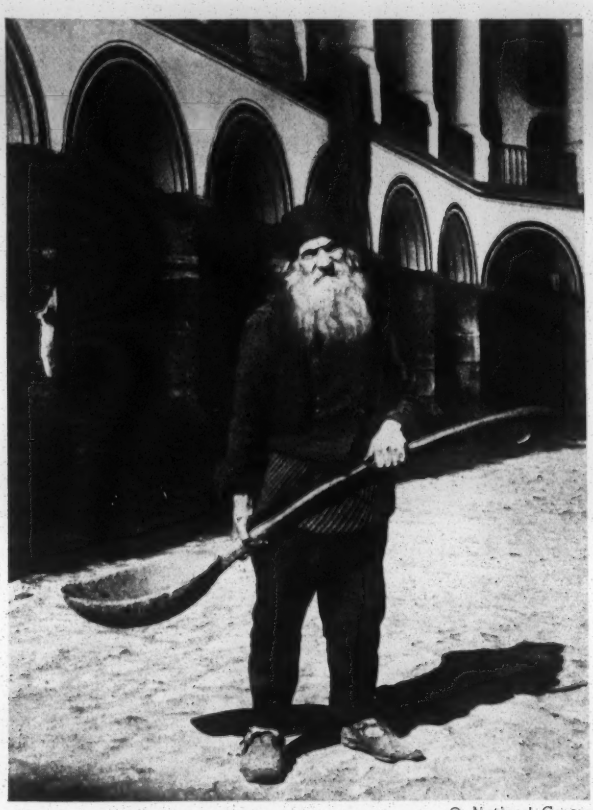
The main attraction of Port Said, aside from the lighthouse, whose beams sweep the shipping safe to port, and the shops where there are displayed cigarettes, novels by Hichens and Kipling, ostrich feather fans, kimonos, sun helmets, Japanese and Syrian damascene, Oriental silks, Parisian postcards and cosmetics, and Abyssinian weapons, is the de Lesseps monument, situated near the inner end of the western breakwater.

A Canal Service dredge in action develops a squeal that reminds one of Circe's captives, frantic with remorse and homesickness. But the humble and complaining dredge is the protector of traffic and as long as the squeal continues the procession will go by.

It is thought that when Kipling wrote "East of Suez" he misplaced Port Said, for the only thing the curio dealers do not keep, nor their customers ask for, are the Ten Commandments. And when the missionary ashore from a China boat deplores conditions in his sociological discussions with a red-capped M. P., that weary individual, to whom even murder would be a relief, dully answers:

"You think Port Said is bad? You ought to have seen it before the war!"

Bulletin No. 3, March 10, 1924.



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THE OLD COOK OF RILA MONASTERY: BULGARIA

This partriarchal-looking individual was an important personage for the poor families that used to visit the shrine at Rila. With this enormous spoon he would ladle out soup to the hungry. (See Bulletin No. 5.)

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Sofia, Capital of a New Bulgaria

SOFIA, capital of Bulgaria, has enjoyed some of the reflected profit of Bulgaria's reconstruction period.

Sofia might be compared to a plot of weeds plowed under to give place to a well-ordered garden. A town existed on the same site throughout the 500 years during which Bulgaria remained in subjection to Turkey; but it was a straggling, unkempt affair of narrow, crooked alleys, alternately mud and dust, lined by squalid structures that were little better than hovels.

From Medieval Village to Modern City

With Russia's liberation of Bulgaria from Turkey in 1887, however, a new era began for Sofia. Slowly at first and more rapidly later, alleys were transformed into streets and boulevards, while modern structures crowded out ramshackle huts. The trend was steadily from the medieval village that represented the Turkish idea of less important towns, to the modern Western city. Recently freed Bulgaria set her face definitely toward the west and especially gave expression to her longings to be considered European through the reshaping of her capital.

The start toward the new Sofia was made by the first ruler of the country, Alexander of Battenberg, who built the royal palace. It is not ornamental but is a substantial edifice far in advance of any structure of the old Turkish town. Much more rapid transformations were made under King or Tsar Ferdinand during the last years of the nineteenth century. He had large sections of the Turkish "slums" torn down and replaced with five-story brick and stucco dwellings.

One factor that has counted heavily in giving Sofia a modern Western aspect is the fact that under 500 years of Turkish repression there was little chance for Bulgarian architectural art to live. Western architects and landscape gardeners consequently were called in. The resulting city of today, built for substantiality, has much the aspect of a modern French city of medium size. It has grown in recent years to have a population of more than 150,000 and is still on the increase.

Occasional Minaret Points to Past

The few touches that bind Sofia to the past come when through a vista of modern business buildings—perhaps over the tops of clanging electric tramcars—one catches a glimpse of a slender minaret of some mosque that has survived the religious cataclysm that turned Moslem "Rumelia" into Christian "Bulgaria." Several of the smaller mosques are still used by the few thousand Moslem inhabitants of Sofia. One, the large Mosque of Buyuk Djamia, is now used as a national museum and library. Another former mosque, Tscherna Djamia, is used as a place of worship by the Orthodox Church (Christian), which is the state religion of Bulgaria.

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The ancient Egyptians knew the water-clock too, and the British Museum possesses one inscribed with the name of Alexander the Great.

The Greeks claimed that the sun-dial was invented by a pupil of Thales of Miletus, but the great sun-dial of Ahaz was mentioned in the Bible when God promised the sick Hezekiah to deliver his city out of the hands of the king of Assyria. Historians have fixed this date as being about 713 B. C.

From Greece the sun-dial made its way to Rome, the first one being set up in the temple of Quirinus. Roman citizens evidently suffered from that universal failing of orators, for in 61 B. C. Pompey the Great set up in the Forum a valuable water-clock which he publicly announced was to limit the long-windedness of speakers.

Sand-Glass Probably Originated in Desert Countries

No one knows how old the sand-glass is. It may have been suggested by the water-clock and probably originated in one of the desert countries—Egypt or Babylonia—where water was at a premium. We cannot tell exactly of what substances they were made, but they were shown on Greek sculpture before the Christian era. The sand-glass or water-glass has two uses all its own at the present time—for boiling eggs, and in the English House of Commons to time the bells that ring to notify members that a division is at hand.

Water-clocks and sun-dials reached high perfection and elaborateness during the ninth century, the masterpieces exchanged by Haroun al Raschid and Charlemagne being two of the most famous of history. The first portable astrolabe arrived from Arabia about 700 A. D. and from that time clocks of various kinds and classes made their appearance until Peter Lightfoot in 1335 made "the earliest real clock worthy of our modern definition." This old handmaiden of Father Time still is "going" in the Science Museum at South Kensington.

The wrist watch is usually considered a modern development of the watch and clock industry, but Queen Elizabeth wore the first one about the same time she introduced silk stockings.

Bulletin No. 4, March 10, 1924.

Form for Renewal of Bulletin Requests

Many requests for the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETIN were made for the year ending with this issue. If you desire the Bulletins continued kindly notify The Society promptly. The attached form may be used:

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Modern ecclesiastical architecture has given the city a number of fine edifices of which the leading one is the Cathedral of Alexander Nevsky, costing a million and a quarter dollars, built as a memorial to the war of liberation. Other fine buildings that have sprung up to replace the hovels of Turkish days are the palace of the Holy Synod, the Parliament House, the Bulgarian National Theater, and the magnificent public bath, a worthy follower of the baths built in the city to utilize the same hot springs when the region was a part of a Roman province. This bath is said to be the finest structure of the sort in the world.

Sofia was founded by Trajan as the Roman colony of Serdica or Sardica about the beginning of the second century after Christ. The Bulgarians later called the place Sredetz, but by the fourteenth century it had taken the name of an old church, which, in a ruined condition, exists today. Like the more famous Sancta Sophia of Constantinople, this Bulgarian church was often called "Saint Sophia," a curious error since no such saint has ever existed. The names of the Bulgarian capital and the great church-mosque of Constantinople both are traceable to "Sancta Sophia," meaning "Holy Wisdom."

Ancient Sardica had its contacts with the early Christian religion, as did many of the old cities of the Near East. The Council of Sardica, held in 343 A. D., made one of the earliest recognitions of the primacy of the Bishop of Rome, and so helped to build up the Papal institution.

Bulletin No. 5, March 10, 1924.

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THE SUEZ CANAL AT KANTARA

During the war, Kantara was the base of supplies for the Palestine military force. Its wharves, floodlighted at night, were scenes of great activity, and back of it on the desert airplanes droned above the landing fields. (See Bulletin No. 3.)